

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend claims 1-3 and 5-6 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A service method of a rental storage, in which rental storage users use the rental storage provided by a storage provider ~~[[or]]~~ on a network and each of said rental storage users and said storage provider communicate with respect to rental storage service, comprising the steps of:
  - establishing a contract between said storage provider and each of the rental storage users thereby allowing using storage of said storage provider by each of the rental storage users;
  - providing calculating by the storage provider an estimation of a data amount in the rental storage for future storage usage of each of said rental storage user, based on the history of storage usage of each of said rental storage user; ~~[[and]]~~
  - showing by the storage provider conditions of said contract including a contracted billing method, a contracted billing period, a contracted storage data amount, a notification threshold storage data amount for triggering contracted notification to each of said rental storage users prior to reaching the storage data amount, and an indication of whether an estimation option is available in said contract for changing the conditions of said contract based upon the estimation, and ~~reporting~~ the estimation to each of said rental storage users; and
  - re-configuring the conditions of said contract as changed by each of said rental storage users if the estimation option is available in said contract,
  - wherein said users are human users (i.e., persons, corporations) having capacity to make contracts and pay bills charged to said human users (*“ideal use of storages in correspondence with the billing charge to the users by proposing the most optimum contract options to the users (Abstract)”*; *“terminal used by the storage user”* in Fig. 3).
2. (Currently Amended) A service method of a rental storage, in which rental storage users use the rental storage provided by a rental storage service provider on a network and each

of said rental storage service users and said rental storage service provider communicate with respect to rental storage service, comprising the steps of:

making a contract between said rental storage service provider and each of said rental storage service users so as to configure contract ~~options~~ conditions based on the contract of use of storage service~~[[;]]~~thereby allowing using storage of said rental storage service provider by each of the rental storage service users;

reporting a charge to each of the rental storage service users by the rental storage service provider;

paying the charge for the use of said storage by each of the rental storage service users to the rental storage service provider;

calculating by the storage provider an estimation of a data amount in the rental storage for future storage usage of each of said rental storage user, based on the history of storage usage of each of said rental storage user;

~~reporting showing by the storage provider said contract conditions and the history of storage usage record and an estimated amount of data of storage usage to each of the rental storage service users from the rental storage service provider;~~ and

reconfiguring by said rental storage service provider said contract ~~options~~ conditions as changed by each of said rental storage users if an estimation option is available in said contract by said rental storage service provider,

wherein said contract conditions include a billing method, a billing period, a storage data amount, a notification threshold storage data amount for triggering contracted notification to each of said rental storage users prior to reaching the storage data amount, rental storage estimation, and whether an estimation option is available for changing said contract conditions based upon the rental storage estimation, and

said users are human users having capacity to make contracts and pay bills charged to said human users.

3. (Currently Amended) A service method of a rental storage, in which rental storage users use the rental storage provided by a rental storage service provider on a network and each of said rental storage service users and said rental storage service provider communicate

with respect to rental storage service, comprising the steps of:

establishing a first contract between said storage provider and each of the rental storage users thereby allowing using storage of said storage provider by each of the rental storage users;

~~when said rental storage service provider and each of said rental storage service users make a contract and the contract options based on the contract of use of said storage specifies a charge system for contracted amount of data according to predetermined usage;~~

estimating by said rental storage service provider amount of data of storage usage in the future based on the history of amount of data of storage usage by each of said rental storage service users;

showing by the storage provider conditions of said first contract including a contracted billing method, a contracted billing period, a contracted storage data amount, a notification threshold storage data amount for triggering contracted notification to each of said rental storage users prior to reaching the storage data amount, and an indication of whether an estimation option is available in said first contract for changing the conditions of said first contract based upon the estimation,

proposing by the storage provider to each of said rental storage service users a recommended contract on an amount of data according to the estimation if the estimation option is available in said first contract, and

re-configuring the conditions of said contract as changed by each of said rental storage users if the estimation option is available in said contract,

wherein said users are human users having capacity to make contracts and pay bills charged to said human users.

4. (Previously Amended) A service method of a rental storage set forth in claim 3, in which: the step of proposing to each of said rental storage service users a recommended contract on the amount of data include the substep of: proposing reduction of amount of data contracted for the storage usage if the storage usage estimated is less than the currently contracted storage usage.

5. (Currently Amended) A service method of a rental storage set forth in claim 3, in which:
- when each of said rental storage service users updates said contract ~~options~~ conditions in accordance with a desirable amount of data of storage usage recommended by said rental storage service provider,
  - if the amount of data of storage usage by each of said rental storage service users exceeds the contracted amount of data for storage usage reconfigured within the contract period of the contract,
  - each of said rental storage service users will be allowed using the storage service for the data beyond the contracted amount of said storage usage.
6. (Currently Amended) A service method of a rental storage set forth in claim 2, further comprising the steps of:
- proposing by said rental storage service provider a reduction plan of the amount of data of storage usage used by each of said rental storage service users; and
  - reducing the amount of data of storage usage used by each of said rental storage service users in accordance with the recommended reduction plan of data,
  - wherein the step of reconfiguring said contract ~~options~~ conditions is performed after the step of proposing by said rental storage service provider and the step of reducing the amount of data of storage usage used by each of said rental storage service users.
7. (Previously Amended) A service method of a rental storage set forth in claim 6, in which:
- when each of said rental storage service users deletes data in use in accordance with the recommended reduction plan of the amount of data of storage usage, said rental storage service provider duplicates on a portable medium a backup copy of the data specified to delete by each of said rental storage service users; and said rental storage service provider sends the backup copy of the data to each of the rental storage service users.

8-14. (Cancelled)